

Application No.: 09/588,350

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REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

The Office Action and prior art relied upon have been carefully considered. In an effort to expedite the prosecution the claims have been amended to clarify the distinctions between the invention and the cited prior art.

One change in the claims is the clarification of the stated "account address" which now conforms with the same wordings used in the specification. It is apparent from the description of the present application that the account addresses are given to account units connected to the communication network so that each account unit can be accessed by other units such as user terminal units, electronic ticket issuer units, examiner units, etc., on the same network as can be understood from the specification. That is, those account addresses are similar to IP addresses given to devices connected to the internet.

Claims 27-33 were again rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Walker (US 6,240,396) in view of Anderson (US 6,209,095). In his rejection, the Examiner separated the invention into individual processes and compares each of the processes to similar words or phrases in the cited art, disregarding what is achieved by each process in relation to the method taken as a whole.

In particular, there is no part in the Walker system that corresponds to the account unit employed in the present invention. According to the present invention, a user is assigned an account unit in which the user can store any kind of electronic ticket that the user owns. Further an electronic ticket which the present invention deals with is effective by itself as a ticket for a particular event. It should be clearly understood that an account unit of a particular address assigned to a user is something like a bank account to or from which the user can deposit or withdraw electronic tickets instead of money. According to the invention, such account units having their own addresses (i.e., account addresses) are connected to a communication network

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and each unit connected to the network can access a desired account unit by using its account address. The Walker patent does not show anything similar to such account units.

The Walker patent shows an intermediary system for users to resell and purchase tickets as explained below, where a central controller is provided with an offer table.

(1) A user who owns a ticket can place on the offer table an offer of selling a ticket, and a user who wants a ticket can place on the offer table an offer of purchasing a ticket.

(2) After conditions are met between a selling offer and a purchasing offer, the central controller transmits the original ticket number (Fig. 7e, step 750) to the venue controller and also the name of the user buying the ticket (Fig. 7f, step 782) to a venue controller;

(3) The venue controller creates a new record in the replacement ticket table and transmits a new ticket number to the central controller (Fig. 7f, step 786);

(4) The central controller transmits the replacement ticket number to the user buying the ticket (Fig. 7g, step 794); and

(5) The user prints the replacement ticket number, takes it to the venue and uses it to gain access to the event (Fig. 7g, step 796).

Thus, it is apparent that the actual ticket in the Walker patent is in a printed form, and there is no electronic ticket to be transmitted on the network, nor is there any account unit on the network to save electronic tickets.

Considering the rejection in greater detail, the Examiner states that "Walker substantially discloses a system/method for managing conditional purchases offers, where ... potential sellers (which is seen to read as Applicant's claimed invention" is not correct because the Walker patent does not show anything similar to the account units employed in the present invention. In addition, the Examiner's recitation of "transmitting a user account address, and a demand for ticket issuance from a user terminal unit to an electronic ticket unit" with reference to Fig. 5C,

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col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-4 is inappropriate because there is no electronic ticket unit in the present invention; rather, it should be an issuer unit. In any event, Fig. 5c illustrates a customer table 530 which stores information on the registered users and does not include any information about the electronic ticket to be sold or purchased. A credit card cannot be an object of selling or purchasing. In the Walker patent, those tickets to be sold or purchased are listed in the offer table 550 which is detailed in Fig. 5d. Therefore, the Examiner's reference to the designated figure and portions of the description in the Walker patent do not present a logical combination.

The Examiner's various recitations from claim 27 with reference to various portions of description in the Walker patent do not establish a valid conclusion of obviousness because the Walker patent does not show any thing similar to the account unit of the present invention.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "transmitting a user account address", there is no description in the Walker patent that suggests the use of an address for accessing an account unit. Naturally, the Walker patent does not show any process that suggests transmitting an account address from the user terminal unit to an electronic ticket issuer unit.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "causing the issuer unit to transmit the demand for issuance to an account unit ..., causing the issuer unit to access the account storage address of the user" with reference to the abstract, col. 7, lines 58-67, col. 8, lines 1-62, it is repeated that the Walker patent does not show any means corresponding to the account unit in the present invention. In the description from col. 7, line 58 to col. 8, line 25 there is described the basic procedures for reselling tickets, and the description from col. 8, lines 26-62 relates only to the registration procedures for a new user who has not previously registered with the central controller. The portions of the Walker patent recited by the Examiner do not teach anything about an account unit or an account address.

The Examiner recites "causing the accessed account unit to transmit to the issuer unit a certificate of account address ... between the account address assigned to the user and an identifier of the user of the account unit" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5,

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lines 1-7. In the Walker patent, there is nothing that could be similar to the certificate of account address which guarantees a correspondence relationship between the account address and identifier of the user of the account unit.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "causing the issuer unit to allow said issuer unit to use the identifier of the user contained in the certificate of account address upon successful verification" with reference to abstract, col. 8, lines 10-63, the Examiner should understand that in the Walker system, the central controller requests for customer ID to find if the customer has already registered for the service. If the customer does not remember his ID, the customer is requested to present customer information such as name, residence address, credit card number, etc., and the central controller checks whether the customer information has already been stored or not, and if yes, retrieves the corresponding customer ID and sends it to the customer.

In the present invention, the account unit transmits to the issuer unit a certificate of account address which guarantees a correspondence relationship between the account address of the account unit assigned to the user and an identifier of the user. The Walker system does not use anything similar to the certificate which guarantees a correspondence relationship between the account address and the user identifier.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "causing the issuer unit to prepare an electronic ticket inclusive of the user identifier" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-7, it is explained in the portion of the description designated by the Examiner that the customer table stores customer identifier and name and address information of the customer, which are stored during a customer registration process. However, the portions designated by the Examiner do not show creation of an electronic ticket inclusive of the user identifier.

The Examiner recites "causing the account unit corresponding to the user's account address to store the electronic tickets in said account unit for subsequent retrieval" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-7, table 530. Certainly, the customer table 530 stores in correspondence to customer identifiers records associated with different customers who may buy and/or sell tickets. However, the customer table 530 does not store electronic tickets. It

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is noted that the offer table 550 in the Walker patent stores in correspondence with customer IDs information on tickets offered for selling or purchasing, but the information itself is not an actual electronic ticket. The actual tickets are kept by the customers.

Regarding claim 29, the Examiner seems to have acted on claim 29 as if it were dependent on claim 27, but claim 29 is dependent on claim 28. Apart from this, the central controller requests a customer ID and if the customer does not remember his ID, the customer sends customer information (name, address, credit card number, etc.) to the central controller which in turn checks whether the accessed customer information has already been stored and if yes, the central controller retrieves corresponding customer ID and sends it back to the customer. That is, what is taught is that the central controller transmits customer ID to the customer if the customer proves to be the true customer. This procedure does not teach anything about the verifying of a circulation condition required on the ticket examining side to which the electronic ticket is to be transmitted.

The Examiner states that verifying the certificate of account address is not disclosed in the Walker patent but in the Anderson patent a public signature verification key verifies account certificate and bank certificate. Of course, it is an ordinary scheme to attach a certificate to a piece of information so that a recipient can authenticate the received piece of information. However, what is the most important feature of the present invention is the provision of account units each of which has an address (i.e., account address) on the communication network and is assigned to a user.

Regarding claim 28, the Examiner should understand that the claim is directed to a method of processing consumption of electronic tickets. The consumption of an electronic ticket is carried out on the premise that the user has already obtained a particular electronic ticket and it is stored in the corresponding account unit assigned to the user. The Examiner's reference to various portions in the Walker patent in relation to the respective processes in claim 28 are almost the same as those referred to by the Examiner in connection with claim 27 which is directed to a method for issuing electronic tickets. In each of claims 27 and 28, the use of account units are recited which is not taught in either the Walker patent or the Anderson patent.

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Regarding the Examiner's recitation "transmitting a user account address which is derived from a user portable processor to a ticket examiner unit" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-4, the designated portions do not teach anything about transmitting a user account address from a user portable processor to a ticket examiner unit.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "connecting the ticket examination unit to an account unit of a respective account address to demand an electronic ticket" with reference to abstract, col. 7, lines 58-67, col. 8, lines 1-62. Claim 28 is amended to clarify that the examiner unit accesses the account unit corresponding to the given account address to demand an electronic ticket.

Regarding the Examiner's recitation "causing the account unit to derive the demanded electronic ticket and to transmit it to the ticket examiner unit" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-7, col. 8, lines 10-63, it is pointed out that the Walker system does not have anything similar to the account unit of the present invention.

The Examiner recites "causing the ticket examiner to request the portable processor to generate an electronic signature" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-7, table 530. However, the Walker system does not show the use of either portable processor or signature. It should be noted that in the field dealing with electronic documents, it is well known that signature (of course, electronic signature) is produced by using a secret key as explained at page 12, lines 10-12, of the present application and is based on a so-called "public key system" which uses a pair of public key and a secret key, and the use of such electronic signature is also disclosed in the cited Anderson patent, Fig. 6, as signatures 126, 140 and 150.

The Examiner recites "causing the portable processor to generate the signature and to transmit it to the ticket examiner unit for verification prior to completion of ticket examination" with reference to Fig. 5c, col. 4, lines 62-67, col. 5, lines 1-7, table 530. The Examiner further states that the customer table 530 maintains records each including a customer identifier, name, and address in association with a customer who may sell or buy tickets. Applicant does not disagree with these statements, but applicant does not find any relevancy of the statements to the

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present invention. The present invention does not use such a customer table. In the present invention, account units are connected to the communication network and each is given an account address which is assigned to a user so that the user can deposit therein and withdraw therefrom the user's electronic tickets.

Applicant requests a telephone interview to expedite the prosecution.

In view of the above, consideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited.

In the event the Examiner believes an interview might serve to advance the prosecution of this application in any way, the undersigned attorney is available at the telephone number noted below.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any fees, or credit any overpayment, associated with this communication, including any extension fees, to CBLH Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 20162-00557-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: May 13, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

By

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